

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02
EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ORM-02 AID-05 /092 W
-----261751Z 059391 /40

O 261648Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6157
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 0863

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJ: SOUTH AFRICAN CABINET MINISTER SUGGESTS POSSIBLE
POLICY CHANGES

REF: CAPE TOWN 0862

1. SUMMARY: MINISTER FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION, SPORT AND
RECREATION PIET KOORNHOF DELIVERED MAJOR SPEECH MAY 24 SUGGESTING
SYSTEM OF "PLURAL DEMOCRACIES" IN WHICH EACH ETHNIC GROUP WOULD
RUN WON LOCAL AFFAIRS, WHILE "CONSENSUS" AND "COLLECTIVE DECISION-
MAKING" WOULD BE RULE AT NATIONAL LEVEL. KOORNHOF PORTRAYED
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POLICY AS LOGICAL EXTENSION OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD
NOT ENDANGER BASIC NATIONAL PARTY PRINCIPLES SUCH AS ETHNIC
IDENTITY AND INDEPENDENT HOMELANDS. HE SUGGESTED THAT EVOLUTION
INTO SWISS CANTO TYPE SYSTEM MIGHT BE ULTIMATE RESULT.
SIGNIFICANTLY, HE SAID NOTHING ABOUT CONSULTING LEADERS OF
OTHER GROUPS. BECAUSE SPEECH WAS DELIBERATELY VAGUE AND
LACKING IN DETAIL, IT CAN AND HAS BEEN VARIOUSLY INTERPRETED

AS ELABORATE ATTEMPT AT WINDOW-DRESSING OF PRESENT POLICY OR AS EFFORT BY KOORNHOF TO MOVE PARTY TOWARD SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL CHANGE. IT PROBABLY REFLECTS WAY IN WHICH CABINET COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF WESTMINISTER SYSTEM IS PROCEEDING AND MAY POINT LIKELY DIRECTION OF SAG RESPONSE TO DEMAND FOR CHANGE. END SUMMARY.

2. SPEAKING AT A CONFERENCE ON "INTERGROUP ACCOMMODATION IN PLURAL SOCIETIES" SPONSORED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION AND THE FOUNDATION FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF AMERICA (AS REPORTED), SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTER OF NATIONAL EDUCATION, SPORT, AND RECREATION, DR. PIET KOORNHOF, CALLED FOR A SYSTEM OF "CULTURAL PLURALISM" WHICH WOULD EVENTUALLY RESULT IN EQUAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RIGHTS FOR ALL SOUTH AFRICANS, PERHAPS IN A SWISS-TYPE CONFEDERAL SYSTEM. CULTURAL PLURALISM, WHICH WOULD INVOLVE ESTABLISHING "GREY AREAS IN THE WHITE PART OF SOUTH AFRICA," WAS DEFINED AS "A STATE OF EQUAL COEXISTENCE IN A MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OR FRAMEWORK OF ONE NATION OF PEOPLE OF DIVERSE CULTURES WITH SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT PATTERNS OF BELIEF, BEHAVIOR, COLOR, AND IN MANY CASES WITH DIFFERENT LANGUAGES." THE CONCEPT INCLUDES THE PRINCIPLES OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY, BUT ALSO INCLUDES "THE RIGHT NOT TO ASSIMILATE." KOORNHOF REFERRED AT LENGTH TO CONNIE MULDER'S IDEA OF "PLURAL DEMOCRACIES," WHICH KOORNHOF CALLED "THE POLITICAL MECHANISM OF CULTURAL PLURALISM." PLURAL DEMOCRACIES, TO KOORNHOF, IS "A COALITION OF AUTONOMOUS AND MAINLY TERRITORIALLY BASED UNITS COOPERATING WITHIN

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A POLITICAL SYSTEM PROVIDING FOR CONSENSUAL DECISION-MAKING AT BOTH GROUP AND NATIONAL LEVEL." THIS WOULD INVOLVE THE CREATION OF TWO LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, ONE LOCAL AND ETHNICALLY BASED, AND THE OTHER NATIONAL AND PRESUMABLY MULTIRACIAL. THE SYSTEM WOULD "OBVIOUSLY" NOT INCLUDE HOMELAND BLACKS, AND WOULD COMPRISE "MAINLY" WHITES, COLORED AND INDIANS. HOWEVER, HE SAID, "THERE ARE THOSE IN SOUTH AFRICA" WHO BELIEVE THAT "IN THEORY AT LEAST," BLACKS REGARDED AS LEGALLY MEMBERS OF PERMANENT COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA "MAY IN TIME ALSO BE DRAWN INTO" THE NEW DISPENSATION. LEST HE BE SEEN AS ADVOCATING SUCH A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE, HOWEVER, KOORNHOF ADDED THAT POLITICS ARE UNPREDICTABLE AND "ONLY TIME COULD TELL WHETHER THIS LINE OF THOUGHT IS FEASIBLE OR NOT." KOORNHOF SUGGESTED THAT THE CABINET COUNCIL MIGHT BE ONLY THE FIRST STEP IN AN EVOLUTION WHICH COULD ULTIMATELY PRODUCE A TYPE OF CONFEDERAL SYSTEM ALONG SWISS LINES, AND PRAISED A STATEMENT MADE BY P.W. BOTHA TO THIS EFFECT LAST SEPTEMBER. KOORNHOF ENDED WITH A WARNING TO "OUTSIDE COUNTRIES" THAT

CERTAIN ISSUES "ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE," AND THAT IF THESE NATIONS "NEGATE REALISTIC ATTEMPTS TO FIND SOLUTIONS" TO SOUTH AFRICA' PROBLEMS THEN "THY WILL NOT ACHEIVE WHAT THEY WANT TO ACHIEVE." HE CONCLUDED: "WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF MR. CARTER'S PREOCCUPATION WITH HUMAN RIGHTS....BECAUSE SOUTH AFRICA OPENLY COMMITTED HERSELF, EVEN IN THE UNITED NATIONS, TOWARD RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS....THIS PRINCIPLE OF RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS ON PAR WITH THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL PLURALISM."

3. KOORNHOF WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT "CULTURAL PLURALISM" IS LOGICAL OUTGROWTH OF EXISTING POLICY AND THAT WITHIN FARAMWORK OF SEPARATTE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING INDEPENDENT BLACK HOMELANDS, WHITES, COLOREDS AND INDIANS IN "WHITE" SOUTH AFRICA COULD WORK OUT CONSensual ARRANGEMENT IN WHICH NO GROUP WOULD DOMINATE THE OTHER. BECAUSE HE DID NOT SPELL OUT HOW AREAS OF

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RESPONSIBILITY WOULD BE DIVIDED, WHAT POWERS COLOREDS AND INDIANS WOULD HAVE OVER LOCAL AFFAIRS AND HOW THEY WOULD SHARE DECISION-MAKING WITH WHITES ON "NATIONAL MATTERS," SPEECH LENDS ITSELF TO INTERPRETATION THAT IT DOES NOT GO FUNDAMENTALLY BEYOND EXISTING SYSTEM AND IS ELABORATE EFFORT TO "DRESS UP" APARTHEID TO MAKE IT APPEAR MORE EQUITABLE AND INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME PROMINENT POLITICAL OBSERVERS, INCLUDING NATIONAL PARTY PARLIAMENTARIANS, HAVE REACTED FAVORABLY TO SPEECH AS CONTAINING SOME ELEMENTS WHICH COULD RESULT IN POLITICAL CNANGES NOT INSIGNIFICANT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT. THESE OBSERVERS POINT OUT THAT REFERENCES TO "COLLECTIVE DECISION MAKING" AND "CONFEDERAL SYSTEM," IF EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, WOULD GO CONSIDERABLY BEYOND PRESENT SYSTEM. AT THE SAME TIME, WHILE NOT ENDORSING INCLUSION OF URBAN BLACKS IN SYSTEM, MERE FACT THAT CABINET MINISTER RAISES THE POSSIBILITY IS BELIEVED BY SOME OBSERVERS TO BE A CONSIDERABLE DEPARTURE FROM PRESENT NP LINE THAT ALL BLACKS ARE CITIZENS OF THEIR RESPECTIVVE HOMELANDS.

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-----261754Z 059460 /41

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5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH KOORNHOFF HAS LEFT HIS POSITION VAGUE ENOUGH TO BE SUBJECT TO VARYING INTERPRETATIONS, SEVERAL OBVIOUS DEFICIENCIES STAND OUT. FIRST, THE PROPOSED SYSTEM WILL BE ETHNICALLY BASED AND WILL BE ALL PROBABILITY EXCLUDE BLACKS. SECONDLY, KOORNHOF MADE NO MENTION OF THE NEED TO CONSULT WITH GENUINE NON-WHITE LEADERS ON THE PLAN'S ACCEPTABILITY; IT WOULD PRESUMABLY BE LEGISLATED BY THE WHITE PARLIAMENT AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE INDIAN AND COLORED COUNCILS. THUS, IN THE POST-VIENNA CONTEXT, KOORNHOF'S PROPOSALS FAIL TO MEET THE TWO BASIC US PRINCIPLES MENTIONED BY VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE.
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6. I BELIEVE THAT THE APPROACH DESCRIBED BY KOORNHOF IS ONE WHICH CABINET COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF WESTMINISTER SYSTEM IS DEVELOPING. RESULTS WERE NOT SCHEDULED TO BE PRESENTED UNTIL PARLIAMENT RECONVENES NEXT JANUARY. HOWEVER, UNDER PRESSURE OF VIENNA, VORSTER MAY WELL ADVANCE THE TIMETABLE IN AN EFFORT TO CONVINCE OPINION AT HOME AND ABROAD THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS MOVING AWAY FROM APARTHEID.

7. FULL TEXT OF SPEECH BEING AIR POUCHED AF/S
ON MAY 30. BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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